

The Sizzle

News for Friends and Fans of Frying Pan Farm Park

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks

Winter 2011



Friends Grew Frying Pan

Frying Pan Farm Park has the unique distinction of being one of the last working farms in Fairfax County, which is just one factor that makes the park very special. Perhaps you've enjoyed a nature hike, been to the 4H Fair, or attended a special event or horse show. As one of the regular visitors, customers and supporters, it's *you* that also makes Frying Pan special.



Three story schoolhouse - part of original parkland
Source: courtesy of FCPL photo archives

On the eve of Frying Pan Farm Park's 50th Anniversary we pause to reflect on the past when this busy and vibrant park that we now know and love didn't exist.

In 1876 a school was built where the present day old Floris Elementary School sits today inside the park. The current building which celebrates its

Centennial Anniversary next year, was completed in 1911. In 1920 a three story high school was built to the east of the four room school house.

In 1958, both the four-room school-house and three-story school at Floris were standing empty as a result of the school moving across Centreville Road to its current location. The three

story school building was torn down in 1960 due to structural concerns. Representatives from the Agricultural and Rural Economic Development Committee (AREDC) requested that the Park Authority purchase the school and grounds in order to continue its use as a site for activities of the 4-H Club and Future Farmers of America. Many local residents were also interested in establishing a model farm on the property. In 1958, the school

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**Join the
Friends of
Frying Pan
Farm Park!**

It's free!

Go to
friendsoffrying-pan.org
to find out how!

Preserving Our Past: Cemetery Preservation Workshop

“Most people are unaware of the great number of family cemeteries around Fairfax County,” says Mary Lipsey of the Fairfax County Cemetery Preservation Association. That is one of the reasons that she and Frying Pan Farm Park Manager Tawny Hammond organized a two day cemetery preservation workshop. We need to “alert people to the need of community preservation,” Lipsey stated. The 50 workshop attendees learned about the importance of cemetery preservation from an expert monument conservator, Robert Mosko of Mosko Cemetery Monument in

Hanover, PA. They also got some hands on experience at Frying Pan's own Meetinghouse Cemetery.

This successful event had attendees from all walks of life, most affiliated with historical societies. Among the attendees was a high school student with general interest in the topic, a woman from Dallas, TX who was visiting a friend in VA, and several that came specifically to see Mosko's instruction.

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**Check out
Frying Pan
Farm Park
class offerings
at**

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fpp/classes.htm



Giddy Up and Have Some Fun!

For nearly half a century Frying Pan Farm Park has hosted a variety of horse shows. Ranging from cute ponies to the majestic and grand Budweiser Clydesdales, the park has seen them all. "Even before being dedicated as park land in 1961, horse shows were held on these grounds as part of the annual fair," says Yvonne Johnson, Park Historian.

Today there are horse shows held almost every weekend - each one open and free to the public. These shows are a rare opportunity for children and people of all ages County to learn about and enjoy different forms of horseback riding. This includes Western, jumping, driving and much more. Spectators will see riders showing off their skills and hard-earned partnerships with their horses. From the thrills of fast-paced barrel racing to the elegant style of jumpers, there is a horse event for everyone!

In the past year, Frying Pan Farm Park has taken steps to provide even more equestrian based opportunities. One way is by offering horseback riding lessons. Riding lessons come in packages of 90 minute sessions and are structured to not only teach proper riding techniques, but also to promote safe handling practices and how to properly care for a horse. Classes are split into groups of children and adults and lessons are tailored to the needs of the individuals as well as the group.

Another exciting way to learn about horses will be through a brand new camp being offered in the summer of 2011. All About Horses Summer Camp is a great way for children to learn about horses and horseback riding. Campers will enjoy horse games,



Frying Pan Farm Park's next series of horseback riding lessons and horse care begins in January!

daily riding lessons, crafts and other summer fun.

Frying Pan Farm Park also gives the opportunity for Girl Scouts to earn their Horse Fan Badge. In this two hour classroom session Girl Scouts meet with an equine professional and learn about the various aspects of horse management. From hoof to tail the girls come away with important knowledge on how to care for a horse.

Schedules and more information regarding horse shows, riding lessons, All About Horse Camp and Horse Fan can be found on the county website or by calling 703-437-9101.



Draft horses demonstrate their strength during a pull event.

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In suburban areas like Fairfax County cemeteries can provide important links to the past. The markers provide symbolic clues about the deceased individuals as well as society as a whole. The Meetinghouse Cemetery can enhance our understanding of Herndon's past, and will give us clues into societal roles and family residents.

Currently, plans are in the works to make this workshop an annual event. For more information about the Fairfax County Cemetery Preservation Association, visit their website: <http://www.honorfairfaxcemeteries.org/>. For more information about

Frying Pan Farm Park visit the website www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/fpp/ or call 703-437-9101.

The workshop included a hands-on component at the Meetinghouse Cemetery



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grounds consisted of "several buildings and four acres of land."

Local citizens, many whose families had farmed the land for generations realized the benefits of preserving the land as they saw their community evolve from a rural agrarian landscape and dairy capital of the region to a more developed area. Dulles airport alone gobbled up thousands of family farm acreage. These early community activists joined forces and successfully saved the schoolhouse buildings and land from development. The citizens organized into what is now known as the Founders, Benefactors, Supervisors, and Friends of Frying Pan Farm Park, or simply as the Friends Group.

The Friends group has been around from the very beginning giving life to the park and shepherding it through its evolution from small parcels of land and school buildings to 130 acres of diverse facilities and programs.

The Friends of Frying Pan Farm Park are made up of people that realize Frying Pan is a valuable treasure entwined in Fairfax

County's past and present history. It's very important to the local community, as it depicts a little piece of the American story that would otherwise be lost.

There's many benefits to joining the Friends group, and it's FREE! Once you join, you will be plugged in to all the latest news from your favorite farm! You'll be the first to know when babies are born, when events are open for registration, and what cool horse show is next! And you'll meet likeminded folk at exclusive *invitation only* events. You'll be joining in a community tradition with the opportunity to continue the legacy of Frying Pan Farm Park.

For more information visit our website: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/fpp/> or call 703-437-9101.



Volunteer Brings Blacksmith Shop to Life

Life is full of chances. For example, after Rick Johnson moved to Herndon 30 years ago he decided to sign up for a blacksmithing class offered by Frying Pan Farm Park. He was eager to begin, only to find out that the class was cancelled. He ended up taking classes elsewhere and became a member of both MD and VA guilds of blacksmiths. Almost 30 years later, when the opportunity arose, he became the volunteer blacksmith at Frying Pan Farm Park.

He has been the volunteer blacksmith for three years now and has enjoyed it. He says that he and the park have "gotten along famously." As a hobbyist blacksmith, his favorite part about volunteering at

Frying Pan is talking with the variety of visitors that come to the park. He likes sharing the history, and working in one of the last working historic blacksmith shops. Frying Pan's shop is the Moffet Blacksmith shop, which was operated by five generations of blacksmiths between 1918 and 1970. It was dismantled from its historic location and moved to Park property.

You can find him working in the Blacksmith Shop at Frying Pan Farm Park for every park event. Please stop by and watch him work. If you like what he makes, you can purchase some of his items in the Country Store.



Colvin Run Mill Manager Mike Henry demonstrates

Are you "out of this world?"

Frying Pan Farm Park is looking to fill the following paid and volunteer positions:

- ★ Summer camp director (paid)
- ★ Wagon drivers (volunteer)
- ★ Farmers Market market master (volunteer)

For more information on how to apply, please call 703-437-9101



Meet Pat Beauregard

“Frying Pan is a true gem in the Park Authority,” says Pat Beauregard, who has been an interpreter at Frying Pan for the past six years. Pat first became involved with Frying Pan as the leader of a girl scout troop, which she brought to the park to earn their Silver Awards. It wasn’t long before she was recruited to be a volunteer wagon driver, and then an employee.

As an interpreter she teaches programs to school groups, scout groups, pre-school aged children, as well as working on special park programs such as Boo at the Farm and Christmas on the Farm. If you think this sounds like a variety, you’re right! But that’s one of the best parts about the job—doing something different every day. She also appreciates the freedom to be creative. She has assessed community needs and created programs to fit those needs.

Pat also coordinates teenage volunteers at special park events. “Frying Pan is a great place to volunteer,” says Pat. She has seen many teenagers come to volunteer at the park for school projects, then stay because they love it so much. She believes that work-

ing and volunteering here is a very rewarding experience.

She believes that Frying Pan is truly a special and unique place, and takes pride in the fact that it is one of the last farms in Fairfax County.

Pat enjoys leading tractor rides through the woods.



Buzzin’ About at Frying Pan Farm Park

Beekeeping is a variable business. No one knows this better than Frying Pan’s volunteer beekeeper, Jon Fraser. In 2009 he had 10 hives and harvested 550 pounds of honey, and in 2010, due to drought and invasive mites, he had 12 hives and 320 pounds of honey.

Most people understand that bees give us honey, but they do not understand the importance beyond that. Bees provide many benefits—such as pollinating the fruits that you eat, such as apples, cherries, squash, etc. Without bees we would have to pollinate these fruits by hand which would be very ineffective, difficult, and time consuming.



John Fraser holds up a honeycomb from one of his hives

Jon Fraser is no stranger to bees or Frying Pan. He is a longtime resident of Herndon, and remembers coming to 4H fairs when he was young. He has been involved with bees since he was a child, too.

His favorite part about volunteering at Frying Pan is being able to set up a display—which he does several times a year—and talks to children and families. He also says he owes thanks to Sherry Bizette, an enthusiastic volunteer coordinator who has taken beekeeping lessons.

If you would like to buy some honey, it is on sale at the Frying Pan Country Store.

Fairfax County Park Authority



Frying Pan Farm Park
2709 West Ox Road
Herndon, Virginia 20171

Phone: 703-437-9101
TTY: 711

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks

Help Frying Pan Farm Park
celebrate 50 years in 2011
with 50 special events.
Stay tuned for details!



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